



Maisie Poppins Nursery

the holistic approach to childhood

Maisie Poppins Nursery: Updated Policies & Procedures

Healthy Eating Policy and Procedure

Overall aim of the policy

To promote the health and well-being of children and their families through food and its acquisition and preparation within the setting. To educate, promote and support children and families we work with to have a deeper awareness and understanding of physiological, physical and mental health's relationship with what we consume and also the ecological and environmental relevance of diet, consumption and consumer choices.

Mission statement/rationale

Our overall aims link to the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), particularly the welfare requirements for food and drink and the Soil Association '**Food for Life**' early years award criterion for which we have met.

We also link to EYFS in relation to supporting children to understand "The world around them" - looking after your planet, also health and self-care - making healthy choices and learning healthy habits for life such as growing, recycling and learning about sustainability. All of this work links right through the EYFS to seasons, seasonal produce, calendar, time, math's and so forth. As per the rest of our ethos and policies, our business and childcare model is holistic. We also meet the criterion and standards guidance within the '**eat better start better**' campaign underpinned by the Children's food Trust and also are recipients of the '**Sugar Smart**' award.

Development and implementation of the food policy

When children first start attending our setting we use the 'all about me form' alongside extensive conversations with parents and child assessments during settling to determine how the child eats at home, any cultural, health or medical specifications around food and look at how we can best work with a family to meet their child's needs and parents' wishes. We are careful to ensure the child's best interests are met.

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Our menu is 4 weeks rolling.

Children also take part in a way they can respond too, we make sure we notice what they really enjoy, and how the variety of foods they try increases and any eating issues of any kind are picked up and monitored and fed back appropriately. We use our online daily diaries to report all for this and we have parent partnership monitoring sheets for specific issues of any kind, which are then referred to the 'Henry Course' and or dietician if required in partnership with parents.

There is an up to date menu displayed in the entrance hall and also on our website.

When and who the policy applies to

The policy applies to all food provided at the setting.

We provide x 3 meals a day, x 2 snack times and 'rolling' snack, water throughout the day. .

We ensure all parents and staff and children understand that we are a 'healthy eating' setting and any allergy needs, intolerances and reasonable parent requests around diet are responded too.

We view food as a ceremonious community activity and ensure this is reflected in the way we serve and eat food together both in the restaurant and our rooms.

Section 2

Food and drink provision

The only drink we provide is fresh water, which we provide for all children throughout the day. We make sure water is freely accessible during both inside and outside play and activities. Children's cups are open and easy to use. Cups are labelled on the side to tie in literacy and health and self-care skills when drinking water.

Breakfast/morning snack, Lunch and tea and afternoon snack are all provided at regular times. Menus are created with experienced chefs.

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Menus are amended and updated regularly.

All meals and catering bar breakfast and snacks will be provided by Valeside catering who work onsite at St Joseph's. Valeside provide professionally catered food by their chefs and in keeping with the requirements of our food awards x 3.

Communicating with children and families

We talk with parents to determine dietary and food thoughts, needs, requirements and so forth to ensure we are getting it right for every child in our care.

We use on-going activities such as cooking, arts and crafts, growing vegetables and herbs outside and health and self-care sessions to support young children's understanding of the importance of eating well and health and self-care. We support children to always eat at the table together and we teach them to use cutlery appropriately, try different food groups, we expose children to a range of tastes and textures and we are mindful of emotional self-regulation around food and careful not to apply pressure around eating so there is less chance of developing any disordered eating.

Breastfeeding

We are highly committed to supporting the rights of breastfeeding mothers and equally respect the right to bottle feed without judgement. We are a breastfeeding friendly environment. We understand that children may still be breast feeding at home before and after childcare and we can discuss how we can best support this choice in contract and progress meetings or at any other point if so desired. There is a breast-feeding cushion in the chestnut room which is always available for breast-feeding.

The eating environment and social aspects of meal times

We use mealtimes to create a sense of community and ceremony around eating together. We sing a song together before eating, we wait for each to finish before getting down, children are encouraged to chat to each other and try new foods and tastes. To enrich the children's exposure to a range of tastes and textures we have 'tasting menus' and 'sensory experiences' with differing spices and so forth which the children really enjoy.

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Children will eat their lunch every day within their designated children's area of St Joseph's restaurant alongside staff and visitors.

Celebrations and special occasions

Food is central to the many celebrations and parties we facilitate at the setting. Parents are involved and culture and ethnicity are key including British Values.

We celebrate Diwali, Guy Fawkes nights, children's birthdays, leaving parties, mothers and Father's Day breakfasts and such like throughout the year. We also have a week-long specialist menu when celebrating Black History Month. The menu is always kept healthy but responds to the diversity and celebration at hand fully and families are invited and involved.

Providing food for all

We are fully responsive to the dietary needs of all children in our care and in addition we are all trained in responding to allergy based anaphylactic shock. We have had extensive experience in caring for children with severe and multi allergies and are a small and bespoke setting that are committed to changing our menu according to need with no issue. We can be Kosher/Halal/vegan/Rastafarian friendly menu wise and any other needs as they come up. We are open, willing and embracing of diversity in all forms.

Encouraging 'discerning' eaters to eat well

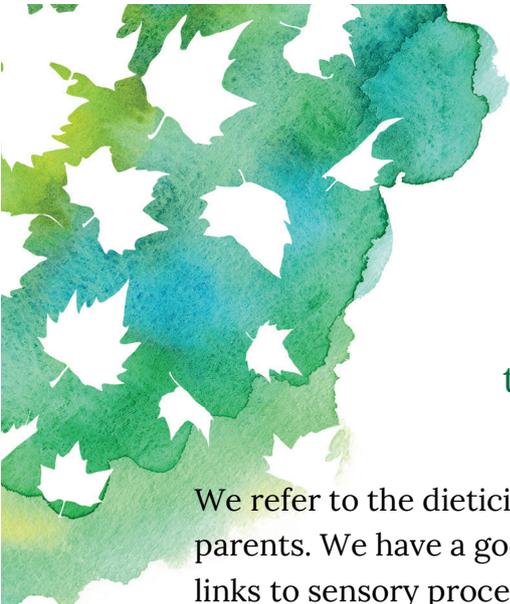
We have worked with several 'discerning eaters' over the years and have sought much advice and understanding over time. We determine a child to be a 'specific eater' if refusing food at least half of the time. We ensure we are not applying pressure or reward and punishment systems around eating, we give the child time and space to eat in peace. We offer food choices and involve the child in food preparation to expose them to having a sense of understanding and ownership over the food. We remain calm and relaxed around food and remove it if uneaten after 20 minutes. We give a child a chance to see if they really dislike a food up to 10/15 times in different ways next to a food they like before giving up on that food and we ensure we are good social role models around eating and the way we eat – sitting down at the table.

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We refer to the dietician and seek advice where necessary in partnership with the parents. We have a good understanding of sensory food aversions and how that links to sensory processing disorder and autism as well as other responses to eating. We also recognise that eating habits are often affected by emotional well-being, transitions and so forth, we work holistically at all times to support children in our care.

Food brought in from home

Due to safety requirements around allergies we can allow any food to be brought in from home.

Learning about and through food

Food, consumer, and ecological and environmental education form part of our daily early years curriculum and are weaved through our delivery of the EYFS. We use local shopping trips with the children to places like Sainsbury's, fishmongers, butchers and such like opt teach how food comes to the shop and process, we have educational displays, regular activities, growing and cooking sessions and partnership work with parents. We also use small world, and the home corner with real food for social role modeling role play work as well as a farm. We also visit Hackney City Farm and the café there.

Food safety and hygiene

Two of the staff in our setting (all of whom cook) have an up to date food hygiene level 2 qualification.

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Sustainability

We ensure children understand the journey food takes as part of their early education. We only buy seasonal produce from the south region as part of our commitment to being a sustainable provider. In addition, we recycle all waste in our home and only use ecological cleaning products. We keep to nutritional guidance around portion size, which reduces waste, and have a clear ethos with the children around 'looking after your planet'. We work in partnership with parents and the whole setting to extend this to healthy minds and bodies with our holistic approach to well-being. Nearly all children arrive at the setting by foot or bicycle and we have a mindfulness approach toward behaviour management rather than a reward and punishment model.

Protecting children's health

We carry out the progress check for all children in our care when they are 2 in partnership with parents, hold regular progress checks addressing all areas including any food behaviours that need looking at. In addition, we promote good oral health and breastfeeding as well as mental health awareness for all especially postpartum with extra family support at this time. We regularly measure children's feet and feedback with our own Clark's foot measurer as well as height and weight as part of health and self-care and math's learning in the EYFS.

Vitamins

The Department of Health recommends that all children from six months to five years old be given supplements, in the form of vitamin drops, which contain vitamins A, C and D. This will need to take place at home rather than childcare. We pass this info on to parents through sharing of this policy.

Dental Hygiene

As per national guidance, we encourage you to brush your children's teeth twice a day for 2 minutes each time. Independent brushing usually begins at age 5. It is advisable not to rinse their mouth with water or mouthwash once they have brushed their teeth as this removes the protective fluoride. We also recommend regular visits to the dentist.

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Exercise

In keeping with national guidance, children who can walk on their own will be encouraged to be physically active every day for at least 180 minutes (three hours). This will be spread throughout the day, indoor and outside.

Evaluation and review of the setting's approach to food and drink provision:

- Using the Code of Practice Checklist to evaluate the setting's approach to food and drink provision and the Menu Planning Checklist to evaluate your food and drink provision, particularly when planning new menus.
- Getting feedback from parents, carers and children.
- Looking at the way other settings approach food and drink provision in your area
- Keeping up to date with current good practice on meeting the welfare requirements for food and drink. Visit the Children's Food Trust website: www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk
- Regularly review staff training and development plans for food safety, hygiene and nutrition.
- Reviewing the food policy at least once a year.

Reviewing our menus to ensure they keep in line with our parallel award with the soil association.

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